

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A prepaid telephone handset provides a balance retrieval function associated with a soft key. A user selects the soft key on a handset to initiate a balance inquiry for an account associated with the handset. A balance inquiry response message is received by the handset to allow the user to determine available account balance. The soft key allows for a single step retrieval of account balance without initiating a connection to a human operator or an automated system.